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PLACE AGE

AGE FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES

JUNE 2018

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PLACE-MAKING WITH OLDER ADULTS
TOWARDS AGE-FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES



Editorial Address

Welcome to the second edition of the Place Age Newsletter!

This is the newsletter of the Place-Making with Older Adults: Towards Age-Friendly Communities project, a 3 year study (2016-19) funded by the Economic and Social Research Council exploring experiences of ageing across 6 cities and 18 neighbourhoods in the UK and Brazil.

A key aim of this project is working towards the design and development of urban areas that support older adults to age in their communities with a high quality of life. Central to this is identifying and addressing the barriers and challenges to ageing in the community, and integrating opportunities to better enable social participation in old age.

The objective of the newsletter is to inform our readers about exciting news and developments from the project.

In this edition we are pleased to report on some of the activities we have been undertaking in our local communities in both the UK and Brazil including a series of mapping workshops exploring barriers and facilitators to ageing-in-place.

The project team have also been busy sharing the findings from the research at key events and conferences, disseminating the information to an academic and non-academic audience.

We are also delighted to launch a new ESRC project (page 14) looking at the design of Age-Friendly Cities in India which will build on the Place Age project and expand to 3 case study cities in India: Hyderabad, Delhi and Calcutta.

Over the course of the project we have been establishing partnerships with local residents, community organisations, service providers and other key stakeholders who have shown a continued commitment to designing urban environments that support older adults to age well. Thank you to those who have assisted and supported us in this work.

We now look forward to the next phase of the research, which is developing recommendations to support the design of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities.

I look forward to staying in touch as these developments unfold.

Lastly, a big thank you to all the local residents who have been supporting us with interviews, photography and participation in the workshops. We are grateful for your contribution.

Best Wishes
Ryan Woolrych



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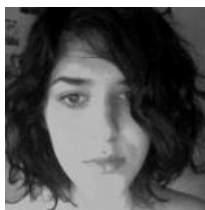
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For more details and to find out more about this exciting research please visit our website: www.placeage.org

Or contact Nadia Goodman, Project Manager by e-mail: n.goodman@hw.ac.uk

Participatory Mapping in Pelotas, Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil

In February and March 2018, 7 participatory mapping workshops were conducted in three neighbourhoods of the city of Pelotas: Navegantes, Centro (Downtown) and Fragata. 124 residents participated in the workshops and shared memories, opportunities and challenges of everyday life in the community.

The activity was facilitated as a conversation circle, where a neighbourhood map (aerial image) was placed on the discussion table. Participants marked the locations on the map, those places and spaces that reflect important aspects of ageing.



Issues regarding safety and security were a consistent theme where residents reported feeling insecure while walking on the streets (fear of robbery) which prevented them from engaging in social activities in public spaces. Inadequate infrastructure for the 60+ age group was reported in-

cluding the absence of quality public spaces to support mobility such as poorly maintained or non-existent pavements.

Another issue highlighted by residents in all three neighbourhoods was the need for public spaces that support physical activities and opportunities for social participation including bingo evenings, music groups, conversation and arts and crafts. In general, when these meetings happen, they depend on rooms provided through church groups. It is important for each neighbourhood to have a community centre with infrastructure that is available for community use. Older residents spoke of their neighbourhoods with affection whilst having family members within close vicinity provided an additional sense of attachment to the area. In terms of meaningful activities, religious groups and other gatherings promote social interaction, reducing the feeling of loneliness and isolation in old age.



Participatory Mapping in Belo Horizonte, Minas Gerais, Brazil

In the city of Belo Horizonte, three participatory mapping workshops with 97 residents of the neighbourhoods of Anchieta, Centro (City Centre) and Serra took place in March and April 2018.

The workshops were facilitated as conversation circles over a map of the neighbourhood. During the workshop, issues that impact the lives of residents were identified and proposals to improve the quality of life of older adults were discussed. The workshop activity was fundamental to facilitating dialogue among the participants themselves. In all the neighbourhoods there was an initial reticence to engage in debate, because the residents were not used to being consulted or having their opinion taken into consideration as part of the urban planning process.

In the neighbourhood of Serra, resident comments were very positive regarding life in the neighbourhood, largely as a result of recent urban revitalisation programmes which have improved the area. In general, everyone claimed to



enjoy living in the area because it is very close to the city centre and is a walkable distance for older adults. The most urgent problems identified by residents were the irregular supply of water and the long wait for public transportation, which connects the neighbourhood to the city centre. As many residents aged 60 years or over still work, mobility is an essential part of their daily lives. A key recommendation from residents was the installation of escalators in the neighbourhood to overcome the challenging topography which makes mobility for the older adults very difficult.

In the neighbourhood of Centro, the difference between the use of public space by women and men was identified as an issue. Women often feel more insecure about

using public space, but reported being more active and healthy in their later years than men. There was a need to have better infrastructure in public spaces to serve older adults, such as street signs, pedestrian crossings and public restrooms. People said they feel very satisfied with the neighbourhood of Centro, which is well served by transportation, commercial areas (shops) and leisure spaces.

In the Anchieta neighbourhood, residents identified the transformation of the area over time, such as the increase in high buildings and congested vehicular traffic. The neighbourhood was described as very pleasant with good neighbours but with many problems regarding mobility and the lack of cultural activities.

Participatory Mapping in Brasilia, Federal District, Brazil

In March and April 2018, a total of 3 district participatory mapping workshops were undertaken with a total of 25 residents in Brasilia, aged 60+ and over, from across the three case study neighbourhoods: North Wing, South Wing and Granja do Torto. The participants were mostly female and resident comments focused on their life stories and concerns about safety.

The workshop activity included a map that illustrated the neighbourhood with key infrastructure and commercial areas highlighted.

The main issues in the neighbourhood of Granja do Torto were the lack of leisure activities, the poor supply of services and the difficulty of mobility within the neighbourhood and in accessing other regions in Brasilia. A preserved area in the neighbourhood, a natural landscape which allows for contemplation was important to the well-being of local residents and identified as one of the positive points of living in this area.

In the South Wing neighbourhood participants identified a lack of activities for



older adults including leisure opportunities, cultural supports and opportunities for group engagement. Those who had lived in the area for a longer time spoke about the neighbourhood with affection, emphasizing the positive aspects of living there. On the other hand, those residents who had more recently moved to the area emphasized the problems with urban infrastructure such as poor pavements and lack of ramps for disabled and older people in the area. However, everyone agreed on issues such as widespread feelings of insecurity (fear of robbery). Older adults also mentioned they don't need to go to another area to have access to shops and su-

permarkets because they have access to amenities.

Residents from the North Wing neighbourhood reported a sense of dissatisfaction with security. Among the positive aspects of living in the neighbourhood, the nearby urban green park is perceived as a place for physical exercise and contact with nature. There was also considerable civic involvement from older adults. In all three neighbourhoods at least one of the participants took on the role of community leader, mobilizing peers and undertaking local action. This type of initiative was valued positively by the residents, as it encourages group contact and interaction.

Participatory Mapping in Edinburgh, UK

In Edinburgh three mapping workshops took place in Leith, Morningside and Craigmillar with 26 participants.

In Leith, the importance of community hubs for older adults was raised. Local libraries (e.g. MacDonald Library; Leith Library) provided more than just books or internet access for the community but also a space for older adults to remain connected. *"One of the aims of the library services is to have a library within reasonable walking distance of all of the areas in Edinburgh. That is one of their, I don't know if we'd call it policies but their attempt to have one available. So I mean it is really important that the, I think there are 26 or 27, libraries should stay open so that the majority of people can access them [...]".* Volunteering was identified as a key activity in retirement. Older adults reported they had significant skills to contribute and wanted to remain involved within their community and to maintain socialisation. *"Exactly, it's socialisation. And I've found*



with the two groups like Friends of Pilrig Park and of the Leith Community Cinema [...] it's nice, it's a really mixed age range." Participants felt well informed of services, programmes and activities available for older adults but there was a need to ensure this information was being translated for more hard to reach groups living in communities.

In Morningside, the participants' perception was that the community spirit is deteriorating. People now tend to live "busy" lives: there is no time to chat, and many felt invisible when using public space *"they walk past you, or if you try to engage in a conversation they think uh-huh, he's an odd ball"*. People are less inclined to get involved in community issues; attributed to the growing disillusionment regarding

the lack of meaningful involvement in the consultation and engagement process. Participants were vocal about transient populations having a negative impact on the community. Such populations (increase in buy to let properties in many areas) often failed to engage in community life and did not align themselves with local community values e.g. respect in terms of upkeep of the community.

In Craigmillar, although there are parks and green space residents are not using these public green spaces in meaningful ways. Since these spaces are in between different types of housing developments, ownership is unclear. *"What they did was [...] that they put back greens in that nobody uses [...] it's a mixture of social housing, flats, private housing, and there's about four different tenures there, they all think it's for something else [...] so people don't use it!"*

Interventions that promote ownership e.g. community gardens were seen as positive but needed to be inclusive for all.

Participatory Mapping in Glasgow, UK

In Glasgow three mapping workshops were conducted in Hyndland, Dowanhill & Partick, Easterhouse, and Govanhill with 48 participants.

In Hyndland, Dowanhill & Partick, key themes identified included the value of community interconnection and the importance of places that offer opportunities for older adults to feel useful, socially engaged and able to contribute to society through volunteering activities. *"My church saved my sanity"* and *"Volunteering [in the church] makes me feel useful"*. Participants highlighted the importance of intergenerational relationships. Older people want to participate in activities and be in spaces that bring together people of all ages and not necessarily participate in age-segregated places or activities. The importance of having parks and green areas in the community was highlighted, providing both aesthetic delight, places to reminisce and as a site for social relations to be developed.

In Easterhouse, community engagement was

identified as a key theme. Older adults emphasised the importance of being involved in community and volunteering groups to expand and strengthen their social and support network and to maintain their mental health and wellbeing: *"Coming to the Phoenix [community centre] has been like therapy for me, I was so depressed before and now I've made new friends"*. Loneliness was also identified as a key issue and it was seen as necessary for community centres to find ways to reach out to people and communicate broadly about their activities and services. However, participants are also aware that sometimes physical accessibility and confidence are key issues: *"Some people*

are desperate and they're lonely on a Sunday, they've got a bit of depression on them; it's hard to go to these places. You need maybe a bit of befriending [service] [...] Some people are just naturally shy and don't want to, they've got to be encouraged to go to groups. [...] You've got to be: come on, come along, you're OK."

In Govanhill, participants highlighted the issue of ageing in the community. Older adults expressed that they wanted to continue living in their community for as long as possible as long as they have choice and are not shunted into 'ghettoes for the old'. Participants also felt that more needed to be done to empower older adults in terms of helping to shape the services they might need support from.



Participatory Mapping in Manchester, UK

In Manchester three workshops took place in Rusholme, Baguley and Didsbury with 37 participants.

Older adults in Rusholme talked about the importance of social spaces (e.g. Trinity House, Platt Hall, Birch Community Centre) and participating in the activities on offer (e.g. social café, luncheons, art classes, walking groups). To older adults these represent opportunities to socialise with people from the community and beyond, and thus strengthen their social and support networks. *"I'm up there three times a week. [...] Well like today is like a talk, discussion things. Wednesday is the art project. We only go to Platt Hall once a week. All the other times it's here. And then Friday it's luncheon club."*

For many, navigating around the community was difficult; the use of shared cycle/pedestrian lanes were confusing for older adults and there was a lack of crossing places within the community. Transport was fine up and down the main arterial routes but inadequate in connect-



ing 'across' communities.

In Baguley, the majority of older adults constructed memories about specific places and spaces. Most talked about how well they know the place because they have been part of the community for most of their lives. Linked to this aspect of place identity was the importance of heritage and retaining memories in relation to place. Participants agreed on the idea that their sense of community has shifted: People used to socialise with their neighbours, but as younger families have moved into the community that has now been lost. *"I think maybe the older generation have moved out and young ones come in and*

they haven't got the time. They go out to work. Then they come in [...]" For most of the participants Didsbury is a place where people come together built upon a strong tradition of community engagement and opportunities to participate e.g. Didsbury Civic Society. Many of the activities available are volunteer-led by local people; offering strong community capacity. *"Didsbury is in fact one of the better places to live for all these activities, [...] and the amount of voluntary activity that goes on. [...] Yes, things can be improved [...], but we are a long way down the path that people haven't even trodden in other areas."*

Research Network Environment and Gerontology at IAPS

International Association of People-Environment studies

We are pleased to announce that Place Age is now part of the Research Network of Environment and Gerontology organised by the International Association of People Environment Studies (IAPS) (<http://iaps-association.org/networks/environment-and-gerontology>). This network is managed by Professor Adriana Portella.

The network aims to improve the understanding of the relationships between older adults (+60 years old) and their built and natural surroundings; to help create environments that support



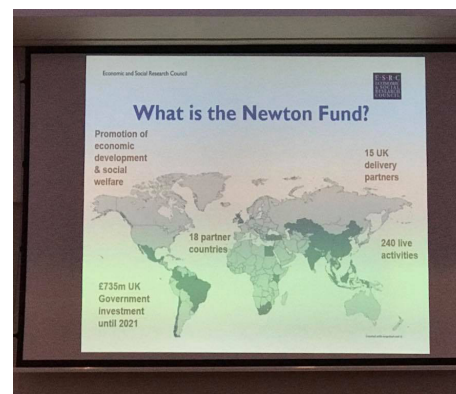
the needs of older people; to facilitate collaboration between academics and non-academics; to stimulate research and innovation for improving human well-being in the physical environment; and to promote the integration of research, education, policy and practice. By participating in the research network, we seek to stimulate international conversations about the topic, and to make contributions that can better support policy and practice.



PLACEAGE-ESRC Urban Transformations Impact Event, Glasgow

Ryan Woolrych, Adriana Portella, and Gisele Pereira were invited to attend the "ESRC Newton Award Holder Event", which took place between 5th and 7th March 2018 in Glasgow, UK. The objective of the event was to bring together principal project investigators who are funded by the ESRC and Newton Fund to discuss strategies for measuring and maximising impact of their projects at global and regional levels. At the meeting, researchers from the UK, Brazil, South Africa, China, India, and Mexico were present

from different disciplines. The purpose of the event was to promote networking and different ways of maximizing the impact of international research, not only in respect of academic outputs, but in terms of translating impact to the various communities and partners involved in the research. During the event several activities took place, such as presentations and interactive discussions, to provoke researchers to think more broadly about the beneficiaries and benefits of international research partnerships.



New Research on Age-Friendly Cities in India

We are delighted to announce that Ryan Woolrych has been successful in a funding application to expand the Urban Transformations research to India. 'Ageing Well in Urban Environments: Developing Age Friendly Cities and Communities' is a £357,756 research project funded by ES-RC-Newton Fund. It is a collaborative project led by Heriot-Watt University in Edinburgh, UK, and Sri Venkataswara University, Tirupati, India which will bring together researchers in the UK, India and Brazil to expand the evidence base to other case study cities in the developing world. The project started in May 2018 and will be completed in April 2020.

Description: Population ageing and increasing urbanisation are two dominant societal trends of the 21st Century. By 2030 two-thirds of the global population will be living in cities and at least a quarter of those urban populations will be aged over 60. Developing urban environments that support and

promote healthy living for older people has become a key driver of urban policy and interventions at a local and national level, resulting in planning design concepts and guidelines to support an ageing population. Responding to these challenges, this research intends to answer the following research questions: How do older adults experience ageing and sense of place across different urban, social and cultural contexts? In what ways can urban environments support the rights of older people to age in place? Building on the Place Age project, the aim of the proposed research is to expand transnational understandings of ageing in urban environments by expanding the data collection to three case study

cities in India (Delhi, Calcutta, Hyderabad).

This will offer a unique insight into how older adults experience ageing and place across diverse and transformative urban environments in India, providing opportunities for knowledge exchange, allowing for comparative analysis within and across case study cities in India, UK and Brazil (when combined with data emerging from the Place Age research), and identifying clear routes to policy and practice. We look forward to providing more updates on this exciting project in due course but demonstrates a commitment to sustaining the work we have been doing in other cities and countries in the Global South.

In the meantime, the research team in the UK have appointed a new Research Associate Deborah Menezes who will be starting August and we will be visiting India in September to share experiences of the project so far and to co-design the first year of the research.



Key findings from Year 1 (2016-2017) of the Project UK-BRAZIL

The activities from the first year of the project 'Place-Making with Older Adults: Towards Age-Friendly Communities' focused on the application of questionnaires, face-to-face interviews, walking interviews and photo diaries in the UK (Manchester, Edinburgh and Glasgow) and Brazil (Pelotas, Brasilia and Belo Horizonte). The work demonstrated that older adults should be seen as knowledge experts in relation to the neighborhoods where they live. However, they often feel undervalued and their lack of involvement in the decision-making processes at a

community and city level. Processes of engagement are often tokenistic and older adults still feel excluded; concerted efforts need to be made to ensure that older adults can shape the policy and practice agenda.

Older adults want to assume active roles in old age e.g. organising forms of civic participation, but are often precluded from doing so through lack of information and awareness, absence of opportunity or barriers to doing so, including those in the physical environment. There were some examples of older adults assuming mean-

ingful roles in the community e.g. acting as an informal carer for others. These roles need to be better recognised and supported in an institutional context.

A common theme across all case study neighbourhoods in the UK and Brazil was the issue of crime and safety. Many felt insecure when using public spaces fearing being victims of crime. Vulnerability in terms of public space was compounded by the quality of public space e.g. lack of pavements and poor maintenance of existing infrastructure. Lack of benches and crossing places were also problematic. This made accessing services and amenities difficult and was a continued frustration for older adults. Irrespective of service provision, there is a need to effectively design the link spaces between home and community if people are able to take advantage of opportunities and connect to basic services. Outdoor spaces can form important environments to age. The role of green spaces was central to narratives emerging from the UK and Brazil.



Green spaces varied in type (public and private) but were important to supporting health and well-being in old age. They often acted as restorative environments for people to spend time, a place of repose and reminiscence. However, green spaces needed to be well maintained, programmed and utilised for them to be valued.

The lack of planning effectively for community spaces has resulted in a poor person-environment fit that fails to respond to the needs of older adults and causes isolation and exclusion amongst many. In some neighbourhoods of Brazil there was the general absence of community services and amenities to engage older adults. In the UK, when it was available, it did not always meet the needs of older people in terms of being fit-for-purpose. Forms of social participation were key to ageing-in-place. Barriers to social participation were often psychological in nature e.g. being afraid to leave the home. Age-friendly supports through befriending supports are crucial in respect of keeping people connected.

There was a general lack of interconnected and integrated supports available for older adults e.g. where transport, housing, health and social care were designed to meet the needs of older adults. As a result, older adults often failed to gain access to the supports that they need. Service in-



terventions need to be multi-sectoral in nature e.g. involving transport providers, social services, housing etc. in a person-centred way that respects and recognises the older adults as an individual.

Across all case study communities, the neighbourhood was an important place of meaning and attachment for older adults. Many are dependent on the immediate community for formal and informal supports. The prospect of moving out of the community can bring about significant disruption to everyday routines and undermine sense of place amongst older adults. At the same time, home can become a vulnerable environment within which to age and the inability to undertake activities of daily living and retain dignity in the home environment, forced many to reconsider housing options. In the UK, participants expressed a desire not to age in 'ghettoes for the old' where housing options needed to support

independence. Changing familial supports in Brazil have raised further challenges in terms of successfully ageing in-place, shrinking the supports that older adults have access to. The issue of technology was raised as an issue. It was identified that currently, as a result of the digital revolution we live in, much information is available via online resources and whilst older adults were engaged in online communities (via Facebook and WhatsApp) not everybody has access to the internet creating a digital divide not by age but between those who do and do not have access. In addition, the role of technology in terms of sustaining the ability of older adults to remain at home and help navigate the community was mentioned as a key issue. Key policy drivers such as Smart Cities represent potential opportunities here, to ensure that older adults can both navigate the city through technology and also provide lifestyle monitoring of other potentialities to support ageing-in-place.

NEWS AND EVENTS

World Social Forum of Older Adults in Porto Alegre

The Place Age team participated in the third World Social Forum of Older Adults from 22nd to the 26th of January 2018 in Porto Alegre. On the 23rd of January Professors Ligia Chiarelli, Nirce Medvedovski and Project Manager Sirlene Sopeña presented on the project, highlighting its results and the progress to date. They also presented the research at the seminar (Age friendly City for older adults – Housing) in the



auditorium of the Pontifical Catholic University of Rio Grande do Sul (PUC), in Porto Alegre. The programme this year focused

on topics related to older adults and people living with disabilities. For more information visit the website: <http://www.fsm.org.br/>

46th Annual Scientific and Educational Meeting, Canada



During the 19th-21th October 2017, professor Judith Sixsmith participated in the 46th Annual Scientific and Educational Meeting of the Canadian Association on Gerontology, Winnipeg, Canada where she successfully presented a poster 'How Age-Friendly Are Our Neighbourhoods? Perspectives from older adults living in Edinburgh, Glasgow and Manchester'

11th World Conference of Gerontechnology in St Petersburg Florida US

Dr Ryan Woolrych presented the paper Exploring the Potential of Smart Cities in the Design of Age-friendly Urban Environments during the 11th World Conference of Gerontechnology, St Petersburg, Florida, US from 7th to 11th May 2018.

UK, Brasilia and Belo Horizonte Team Mission to Pelotas

The teams from the UK, Brasilia, and Belo Horizonte visited the city of Pelotas from the 4th to the 8th of December 2017. The teams participated in a series of meetings, visited the neighbourhoods of the case studies in Pelotas (Navegantes, Fragate and Centre) and participated in the first participatory mapping with the residents of the centre. The teams gained a better understanding of the challenges of the residents of these neighbourhoods, and opened up dialogue about how we can improve quality of life and public space. During the visit to Pelotas, the teams from the United Kingdom, Brasilia and Belo Horizonte had the opportunity to meet Professor Flavio Delmarco- Postgraduate and Research Director of the Federal University of Pelotas, Professor Rafael Vetro-mille Castro- Postgraduate Coordinator of Federal University of Pelotas, and Professor Mauricio Polidori, the Director of the Faculty of Architecture of the University of Pelotas, at the Doce Museum to discuss the current development of PlaceAge project and the collaboration between the universities. The team also visited Navegantes, where in the CRAS (Social Assistance Reference Centre) they had the opportunity to meet the social assistants working with



the older adults, children other members of the community. In Fragata, the team had the opportunity to talk to the local administrator of the condominium COHAB Duque, where most of the residents are older adults. During both visits, the team furthered their understanding of how older adults are supported in their communities, particularly with regards to health, well-being, and social participation. This has

helped the UK team to better understand the challenges and opportunities for ageing in the face of the Brazilian context. Ryan Woolrych and Adriana Portella were invited to be interviewed by the newspaper Diario de Pelotas to present the project next steps for the research in 2018. The mission ended with a visit to Charqueada São João, where the farmers produced the dry meat called charque.



Visit of Queen's University Physical Activity Group to Edinburgh

On the 26th January 2018, the Healthy Urban Living & Ageing in Place: Physical Activity, Built Environment & Knowledge Exchange in Brazilian Cities (HULAP) team from School of Natural and Built Environment Queen's University, Belfast visited Heriot-Watt University to meet members of the Place Age Project. The HULAP team comprised Claire Cleland, Geraint Ellis, Ruth Hunter, Sara Moutinho Barbosa de Melo, Sara Ferguson. The



Place Age team comprised Ryan Woolrych, Michael Murray, Judith Sixsmith, Jenny Fisher, Meiko Makita. The teams engaged in an interesting discussion about the key opportunities and challenges in

doing cross-national research. In addition areas of overlap and potential collaboration among both projects was discussed and next steps were agreed.

Seminar in Toronto, Canada

Professor Rebecca Lawthom presented on Place Age in a seminar at the Reclaiming Disability Studies on Tuesday Feb 20th, 2018 at the University of Toronto, Canada.



Event at Manchester Metropolitan University

On the 26th September 2017, during an event organised by the Vice Chancellor's office at the Manchester Metropolitan University, professor Rebecca Lawthom gave a presentation for the professors and researchers about being a professor of community psychology. She spoke about a number of projects that she is working on including Place Age.





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